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Promotion and protection of human rights

Report of the Human Rights Council

Security Council
Sixty-second year

Letter dated 22 June 2007 from the Permanent Representative of Cuba to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the declaration of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Cuba concerning the Human Rights Council, issued on 19 June 2007 (see annex).

I kindly request that the above-mentioned document be circulated as a document of the United Nations under agenda items 67 (Promotion and protection of human rights) and 68 (Report of the Human Rights Council), as well as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Rodrigo **Malmierca Díaz**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 22 June 2007 from the Permanent Representative of Cuba to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: Spanish]

Declaration of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

At the end of its fifth session in Geneva, the Human Rights Council decided to discontinue the mandate of the so-called Personal Representative of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the situation of human rights in Cuba, thereby putting an end to the attempts of the United States Government to manipulate the issue of human rights in our country.

That decision, taken by the body that has replaced the discredited Commission on Human Rights, represents a historic victory in our country's fight for justice and for an end to the anti-Cuban project conceived by the United States as a pretext for maintaining and intensifying its genocidal policy of embargoes and aggression against Cuba.

With that decision, the Human Rights Council recognizes the unjust, selective and discriminatory nature of the acts that have been committed against our country for two decades, and gives the lie to the resolutions and mechanisms that the North American Government, by means of coercion, threats and blackmail, forced upon the now defunct Commission on Human Rights.

This outcome could not have been achieved without the support of the members of the Non-Aligned Movement and other Third World countries. Even the member States of the European Union, unfailing allies of the United States in the action it took against our country within the framework of the former Commission on Human Rights, had no choice but to agree to discontinue the discredited mandate against Cuba, since that was the only way to lend credibility to the Council, which is now coming to the end of its first year of operation.

This outcome represents an essential act of justice for the valiant and generous Cuban nation, whose sons and daughters contributed to the eradication of colonialism and apartheid in Africa and are now working quietly and selflessly to ensure that millions of people in more than 100 countries can enjoy their human rights. Over 42,000 Cuban doctors, nurses, teachers, sports coaches, engineers and technicians are showing their solidarity in the pursuit of that goal. It represents an act of justice for a nation whose universities are currently educating, free of charge, over 30,000 young people from 118 countries and which has restored the sight of almost 700,000 individuals from 31 countries.

It represents recognition of the worth and the efforts of Cuba and its Revolution; the contribution of the latter to the promotion and protection of the human rights of all citizens and to the creation of an increasingly just, egalitarian and humane society cannot be overlooked or distorted.

It is a well-deserved recognition of Cuba's efforts to defend the interests of the Third World and to condemn and resist the attempts of the United States to achieve imperial domination. A recognition of Cuba, which, on its merits and in spite of the pressure brought to bear by the Government of the United States and the European

Union, which worked actively to undermine its candidacy, was elected as an original member of the Human Rights Council, obtaining 135 votes — more than two thirds of the membership of the United Nations General Assembly.

In spite of the Council's ongoing deficiencies and shortcomings, the outcome of the recently concluded institution-building process will benefit the Third World countries, which have come together under the banner of the Non-Aligned Movement, currently chaired by Cuba. The Movement played an active role in that process, ensuring that issues of particular importance to Southern countries, such as the situation of human rights in Palestine and the occupied Arab territories, the right to development, and racial discrimination and xenophobia were included in the Council's agenda.

It now remains to be seen whether the industrialized countries, which used the former Commission on Human Rights as a vehicle for the imposition of their ideas and political vision, are really willing to work on the basis of the principles of universality, impartiality, objectivity, non-selectivity, constructive dialogue and cooperation and to avoid the double standards and politicization that resulted in the discrediting of the now defunct Commission on Human Rights, which became an inquisitional tribunal designed to try the Southern countries.

In its capacity as chair of the Non-Aligned Movement, Cuba has played an important role in the aforementioned process, and it will continue to fight to defend truth, its own sovereignty and the interests of the Third World countries.

Havana, 19 June 2007